



Yardbirds Backyard Chickens

Chicken Care Sheet 2020

Below are some guidelines for care that we have found to work well for the average chicken owner. These are suggestions rather than requirements - you and your family are welcome to use these to develop a system that will work for you!

Daily

- Make sure everyone has plenty of clean water and food
- Check that everyone seems healthy and happy and is behaving normally
- Collect eggs and gently brush them off (counter storage), or lightly rinse with warm water and mild hand soap (fridge storage)
- Spot-clean any piles of poop or wet shavings in the coop or run as needed
 - All bedding/poop/feathers/etc can be composted at home!*
- Take a moment to enjoy your flock! ☺

**Note that the volume of bedding/poop will be too large for a typical urban compost bin, so you may want to plan for a larger pile system, or check if your town will collect animal bedding as yard waste.*

Weekly/Every other week

- Rinse and scrub waterer for any dirt, slimy film, or algae buildup (can use mild dish soap)
 - You might keep a scrubby sponge just for “chicken dishes”
 - Make sure waterer is rinsed thoroughly of any soap residue before refilling
- Spot clean any larger messes in coop, such as the areas under the roost(s)
- Scrape poop off roosts and other surfaces as needed

Monthly/As needed

- Clean out all shavings in the coop and nestboxes and replace with fresh shavings
- Spot clean any feather or shavings accumulations in the run (especially during molt)
- Empty the feeder of all residual crumbs and spot clean as needed
 - If you need to use soap/water, make sure feeder is thoroughly dry before refilling
- Give everyone a quick health check for parasites, body condition, bumblefoot, etc

Yearly

- Thoroughly clean the inside of the coop
 - Use non-chemical cleaners that will not emit fumes, and be sure coop is well-ventilated and has plenty of time to air out before the girls go to bed
- Till (mix up or turn over) the “crust” in the top 6-12” of dirt in the run
- Have all adult birds in your flock tested by the state (optional)
 - This only needs to be done if your birds will be leaving your property
 - Call your regional Poultry Inspector to schedule an appointment
- Renew your poultry permit, if required by your city or town

Good luck, and send us an email if you have any questions, no matter how small!

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